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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - NORTH KOREA / WTO - TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: All Friday morning papers gave top and front-page play to the first day of the six-party talks Thursday in Beijing, during which the DPRK expressed its readiness to take initial steps toward denuclearization.

¶1. "No Compromise on Nuclear Dismantlement" The moderate Mainichi editorialized (2/9): "...We are concerned about what the DPRK will be given in return for its nuclear dismantlement and are also worried that the US and Japan could fall out of step on the policy of using both dialogue and pressure on Pyongyang.... There is concern that the US has been making compromises since its bilateral meetings with the North Koreans in Berlin. Given the fact that Pyongyang possesses nuclear weapons this time around, a half-baked agreement could result in something worse than the 1994 Agreed Framework. Unsatisfactory results would also present Iran with a bad example.... Close coordination between Washington and Tokyo on the idea of rewards to the DPRK is needed in order to avoid the mistakes that followed the Agreed Framework."

¶2. "Don't Miss Opportunity to Resume WTO Talks" The business-oriented Nikkei said in its editorial (2/9): "The suspended Doha Round of WTO negotiations appears likely to be resumed soon. WTO Director-General Lamy declared a resumption following President Bush's call on Congress to approve his trade promotion authority (TPA) and his pledge to reduce agriculture subsidies.... The US Congress holds the key to progress.... Although it remains uncertain whether the Democrats will approve an extension of the president's TPA, which expires on July 1, Bush has made the difficult decision to work with Congress. This decision by the Bush administration is significant.... As chances for a resumption of the round

appear to be growing, Japan, which is heavily dependent on trade, should also play a leading role in promoting the multilateral trade talks."

SCHIEFFER